

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated February 22, 2008. Claims 1 to 9 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 5, 7, 8 and 9 are the independent claims. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claim 9 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 for being directed to non-statutory subject matter. In particular, the Office Action alleges that Claim 9 is directed to functional descriptive material which is not stored on a computer-readable medium. Without conceding the correctness of the rejection, Claim 9 has been amended to recite a "computer readable program, stored in a computer-readable storage medium" as suggested by the Examiner. Thus, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2, 7 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,409,401 (Petteruti). Claims 3 to 6 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Petteruti in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,530,702 (Palmer). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 7 and 9

The invention of Claims 1, 7 and 9 generally concerns image processing. In particular, first input image information having an attribute for printing is printed on a recording medium, and second input image information having an attribute for storing is written to a storage device attached to the recording medium. According to one aspect of the invention, the second image information is written with a plurality of level information for visualizing, to the storage device, and a content to be printed is varied based on the

level information.

For example, as depicted in Figure 1 and described on pages 4 and 12 of the specification of the present application, in a case where image information is input, only an outline of the input image information is first printed on a recording medium. Then, if necessary, detailed content of second image information can be printed from a storage medium attached to the recording medium. In addition, according to level information, content of the print based on second image information can be changed, for example, with respect to each user who instructs to print.

By virtue of this arrangement, it is possible to provide a document having a large amount of information without using a large number of paper documents. In addition, since print content for image information is varied for each user according to level information, only image information intended to be viewed by a user is viewable.

Referring specifically to claim language, amended independent Claim 1 is directed to an image processing apparatus. The apparatus includes an input unit which inputs image information including a first image information having a first attribute for printing and a second image information having a second attribute for storing. The apparatus further includes a printer which prints an image based on the image information input by the input unit on a recording medium to which a storage device is attached, and a writing unit which writes the image information to the storage device attached to the recording medium. Additionally, the apparatus includes a controller which controls the printer and the writing unit to print the image based on the first image information having the first attribute input by the input unit on the recording medium and to write the second image information having the second attribute input by the input unit with a plurality of

level information for visualizing to the storage device attached to the recording medium on which the image is printed by the printer. The apparatus also includes a reading unit which reads the second image information stored in the storage device. The controller controls the printer to print an image based on the second image information having the second information read by the reading unit on a recording sheet in a case where the reading unit reads the second image information, and to vary a content to be printed based on the level information written on the storage device by the writing unit.

Amended independent Claims 7 and 9 are directed to a method and a computer readable program, respectively, substantially in accordance with the apparatus of Claim 1.

The applied references, alone or in any permissible combination, are not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of Claims 1, 7 and 9, and in particular, are not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the features of writing image information with a plurality of level information for visualizing to a storage device attached to a recording medium, and to vary a content to be printed based on the level information written on the storage device.

As understood by Applicants, Petteruti is directed to a portable printer having a printer mechanism for printing on media and an RFID encoder for encoding information onto RFID circuits coupled to the media. (See Petteruti, Abstract).

However, Petteruti is not seen to disclose writing image information with a plurality of level information for visualizing to a storage device attached to a recording medium, and to vary a content to be printed based on the level information written on the storage device.

Palmer is not seen to remedy the above-noted deficiencies of Petteruti. As understood by Applicants, Palmer is directed to an RFID tag which can be attached conformably to articles of varying shapes and sizes and which can be used in a supermarket checkout system to permit rapid checkout of items. (See Palmer, Column 4, lines 34 to 39).

In this regard, Palmer is seen to disclose that a central supermarket computer is programmed to retrieve product information such as name, brand, size, weight, etc. associated with an article ID code and to output the same to a display. (See Palmer, Column 6, lines 40 to 44). Palmer also discloses that the same product information can also be output to a printer for generation of a checkout invoice. (See Palmer, Column 6, lines 44 to 46).

However, Palmer is not seen to disclose writing image information with a plurality of level information for visualizing to a storage device attached to a recording medium, and to vary a content to be printed based on the level information written on the storage device.

Therefore, independent Claims 1, 7 and 9 are believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

Claims 5 and 8

The invention of Claims 5 and 8 is directed to image processing for generating image information to be printed. According to one aspect of the invention, an attribute of generated image information indicating whether or not the image information is to be visualized is set. Then, the generated image information and the set attribute are transmitted to a printer loaded with a recording medium to which a storage device is

attached.

By virtue of this arrangement, it is possible to cause a printer to print image information intended to be viewable on a recording medium, and to store image information not intended to be viewable on the recording medium in a storage device.

Referring specifically to claim language, independent Claim 5 is directed to an image processing method. The method includes a generating step of generating image information to be printed. The method further includes a setting step of setting an attribute of the image information generated in the generating step, the attribute indicating whether or not the image information is to be visualized. The method also includes a transmitting step of transmitting the image information generated in the generating step and the attribute set in the setting step to a printer loaded with a recording medium to which a storage device is attached.

Amended independent Claim 8 is directed to a computer readable program substantially in accordance with the method of Claim 5.

The applied references, alone or in any permissible combination, are not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of Claims 5 and 8, and in particular, are not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the features of setting an attribute of image information, the attribute indicating whether or not the image information is to be visualized.

In this regard, page 13 of the Office Action concedes that Petteruti fails to disclose a setting step of setting an attribute of an image information generated in the generating step, the attribute indicating whether or not the image information is to be visualized.

Nevertheless, the Office Action relies on Palmer (Column 6, lines 40 to 46)

for this feature. As discussed above with regards to the allowability of Claims 1, 7 and 9, Applicants understand Palmer to be directed to an RFID tag which can be attached conformably to articles of varying shapes and sizes and which can be used in a supermarket checkout system to permit rapid checkout of items. (See Palmer, Column 4, lines 34 to 39).

However, the cited portions of Palmer simply disclose that a central supermarket computer is programmed to retrieve product information associated with an article ID code and to output the same to a display or to a printer for generation of a checkout invoice. (See Palmer, Column 6, lines 40 to 46). Thus, Palmer is not seen to disclose setting an attribute of image information, the attribute indicating whether or not the image information is to be visualized.

Accordingly, independent Claims 5 and 8 are believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

The other claims in the application are each dependent from the independent claims discussed above and are believed to be allowable over the applied references for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

No other matters being raised, it is believed that the entire application is fully in condition for allowance, and such action is courteously solicited.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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